

D/OCI-1707-75

December 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of Congresswoman Margaret Heckler (R.-Mass.)

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1. On December 18, a group consisting of myself, OCI China political analyst [] and OER's China Division Chief [] participated in a briefing requested by Congresswoman Margaret Heckler (R.-Mass.). We were accompanied by [] from the Office of Legislative Counsel. The purpose of the briefing was to give an overview of the political and economic situation in China for a delegation of 12 women members of the House of Representatives departing for China about December 27. A day or so before the briefing, Mrs. Heckler requested that Angola also be covered.

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2. The briefing took place in the Capitol in a guest lounge reserved for women members of Congress. The atmosphere was generally relaxed, perhaps because of the less formal setting, and the briefing seemed to go fairly well despite three or four interruptions for voting. Eight of the Congresswomen were present at some point or another during the briefing, which got off to a late start (not our fault) and lasted more than an hour. Those present included Representatives Heckler, Holtzman (D.-N.Y.), Boggs (D.-La.), Burke (D.-Calif.), Schroeder (D.-Colo.), Spellman (D.-Md.), Fenwick (R.-N.J.), and Meyner (D.-N.J.). Our disappointment was that Bella Abzug (D.-N.Y.) did not show []

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3. Presumably because of the then ongoing Senate debate, Mrs. Heckler asked that the briefing begin with Angola. I covered that part, with some contributions from [] when questions touched on China's interest and on whether the Chinese might raise the subject with the congressional delegation. [] (I thought not.) I went over some background on the three Angolan liberation movements and the history of Soviet--as well as Cuban, Chinese and Zairian--involvement, and the various factors behind

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the current military escalation. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] at one point Rep. Fenwick made an impassioned rhetorical query as to why Secretary Kissinger had taken the course he did, rather than appeal to the UN or world opinion about increasing Soviet/Cuban military involvement. Other questions, many of them from Holtzman, centered on the popular support for, and "legitimacy" of, the three Angolan movements and on the character and purposes of South African intervention.

4. The China briefing began with the economic picture presented by [REDACTED]. He covered primarily China's accomplishments during some 23 years under Communist rule, stressing that except for the setbacks of the Great Leap and Cultural Revolution, progress had been fairly steady. Questions on the economy revolved around the suitability of the Chinese model for other underdeveloped countries, and Mike handled these question by citing the many pluses in the China picture but also the heavy costs in terms of efficiency as well as in socio-political terms. The briefing shifted smoothly to [REDACTED] as a result of a question on provincial economic turmoil. [REDACTED] briefing, tailored around questions posed to her, was oriented largely toward topics likely to come up during the delegation's visit, including the status of universities, civil liberties, political reform camps, personalities and the succession problem, and attitudes toward women. The briefing proved informal and conversational, and the House members seemed interested.

5. The briefing ended around 4:00, with an audience that had dwindled to a hard core of three or four representatives, some of whom lingered. The members thanked us cordially and seemed reasonably satisfied. In any event, none of us was given a rough time and none of us was left droning on to a sleepy gathering.

cc: ✓ D/OCI
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